



ON THE BEACH.

JOB PIGSTIRRUP.

BY M. E. W. S.

CERTAIN donkeys being required by some invalid ladies at the sea shore this summer, we were referred to an old gentleman who kept some of these useful animals at a farm two miles from the beach.

We found a stout, dirty little German man, with a face nearly as large as a barrel top, and covered with great warts, who, however, had a pleasant smile and no end of donkeys to let.

He talked a queer lingo, which I cannot attempt to write out, so shall tell you his story as well as I can in the American language.

He came from Strasburg, he said, and was as poor as he could be, but by sweeping the streets he got enough money to start a donkey-cart, and then made more and more money until he had reached his present proud position of large donkey owner near a fashionable watering-place.

"But," said he, after he got intimate, "I don't care for monish — *I loss mine leetle poy!*"

"Did he die?" asked one of his customers.

"No, he vas stole from me in New York! Oh! mein dear little *Pickleback*!"

And here Job Pigstirrup shed a few tears and wiped them off on the donkey.

Pickleback and *Pigstirrup* were undoubtedly good German names, if we could only have understood his queer provincial; but he was totally unintelligible, sometimes, was Job Pigstirrup, so we gave up trying to imagine what they meant.

One of our ladies was a philanthropist, and she felt very sorry for the poor foreigner who had lost his boy, so she got all the particulars from him. It seems that the wife had died on the emigrant steamer coming over here; and no wonder either, for they treat these poor people shamefully, sometimes; and then Job, and *Pickleback*, had landed at Castle Garden. They went walking round the street, and ate some cheese and drank some beer at a German shop. Perhaps Job drank too much beer, at any rate he lost *Pickleback* somewhere and never found him — "never, no more," as he said.

"How old was he?" asked the lady.

Job held up the dirty fingers of both hands, bending down one.

"Nine?" said the lady.

Job nodded his head and whipped the donkey.

To look for a young German of nine years in crowded New York, after two years had gone by, seemed like looking for a needle in a hay-stack; but this lady did not despair. She knew that stranger things had happened than the recovery of a lost child, and as she had three boys of her own—Adrian, Jem, and Giles—she told them that if they would be her "police," and look for Pickleback, she would give them unlimited credit with Job, and as many donkey drives and rides as they chose to take. Adrian, Jem and Giles were delighted with this permission, and made a solemn compact to search New York for the lost heir of the donkey trade, when they should go home again.

Now, next to Pickleback, Job loved a donkey whom he called "Shicken." We supposed that he meant chicken, as he always pointed out one of these familiar birds as he said "Shicken."

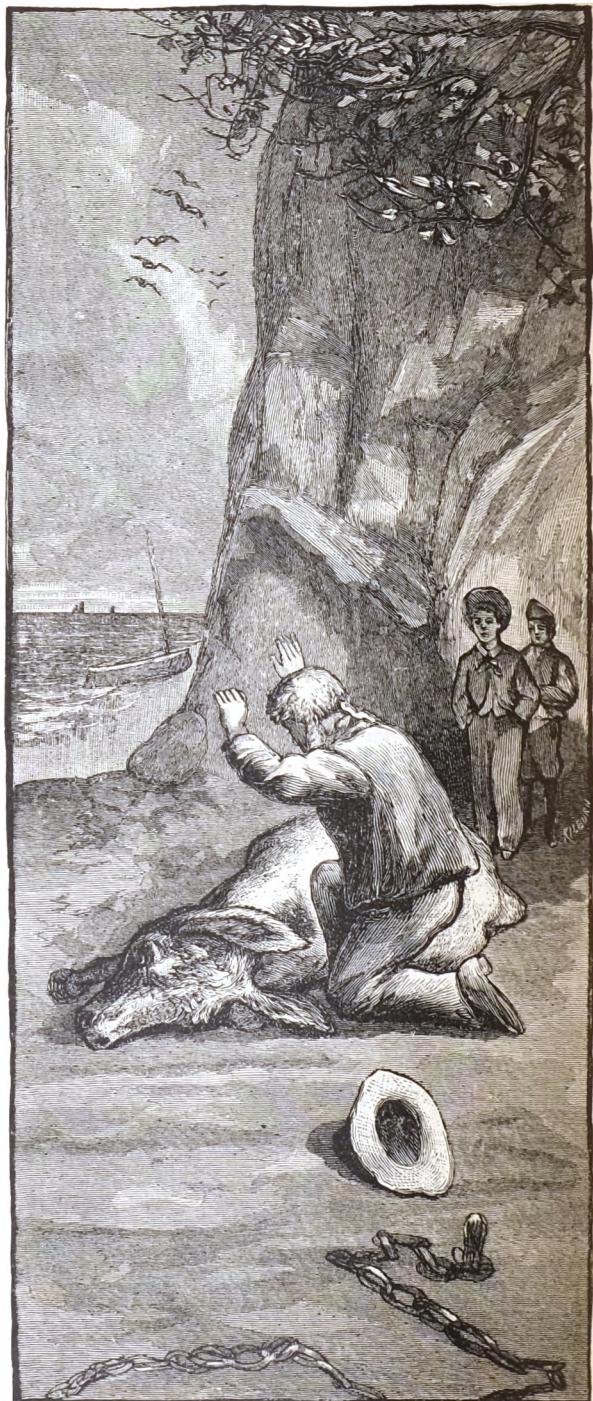
I suppose Shicken was the most obstinate donkey that ever was born. He always went backward when he did not go sideways, and stopped short when you was in a hurry. Job used to flatter him, give him sugar, and prod him with an iron-pointed stick, but on some days Shicken was proof against all these endearments. He was a very pretty mouse-colored little donkey, with a cross on his back, and a voice like an old pump-handle which has never been oiled. Oh! it made your teeth ache to hear Shicken express his feelings!

However, Adrian took a fancy to him (it must have been his beauty), and while his mother had a patient, good little fellow named "Lager," and Jem had "Gingerbread," and Giles had "Kraut," (all Job Pigstirrup's donkeys) Adrian and Shicken struggled along behind the party, and Job would prod, and talk, and tell the story of Pickleback, and they would ride along the beach, and enjoy the salt air, and the great waves, and the splendid music of the sea. The little sandpipers would come out and get crushed under the donkeys' feet, and the birds would run away before the waves, and all the party would be very happy, except poor Job Pigstirrup, who always pointed to Giles.

"He just like *Pickleback*," he would say, "in size."

Now, Adrian was a very clear-headed boy of twelve

years, and he had a great idea of conquering both Fate and Donkeys. He liked to ride Shicken be-



"OH, MY POOR SHICKEN!"

cause he had to fight the donkey's obstinacy all the

time, and he felt the same strong determination to find Pickleback. Old Job was very kind and obliging and did the boys a thousand services. He had donkey-carts in which they took drives when tired of riding, and he knew some secrets of fishery.

One day, however, they found him in great grief. Shicken had disappeared! Allowed to go and graze on a sort of common near the stable, the donkeys had picked up much of their own living, and had never shown any desire to stray. It appeared that a young lady had brought her own donkey to the beach, and possibly, Job thought, Shicken might have gone off to pay the new donkey a call. But no one knew anything about the stray animal, and certain cruel boys declared that they were very glad that he was gone, remembering certain backward kicks from Shicken's hind leg.

However, the poor little bad donkey was found dead at the foot of the bluff, next morning, having walked off in the night; and Job sat down by his dead body, and kissed the poor, hairy face, and wept bitterly.

No matter what Shicken was — a donkey, and a bad donkey at that — Job loved him, and he mourned him as he had never mourned anything before but his wife and Pickleback.

"I lofes 'em all, and they all goes away," said the poor lonely affectionate fellow.

Shicken's remains were taken away on a dray, his two companions, Gingerbread and Kraut, being harnessed to the melancholy duty. Adrian, Jem and Giles were chief mourners, for Job, although weeping had to drive the mules. Adrian was ashamed to cry, but Jem and Giles were not big enough for any false shame, so they lifted up their voices and wept aloud, which comforted poor Job, for sympathy is always sweet. Shicken's remains, with the mouth wide open, and the poor little tail straight out, looked more amiable and contrite than he had ever done in his life, and the funeral procession made us older people laugh — which was very heartless of us, and I daresay we shall all be punished for it some day by losing a donkey whom we love, as we deserve to be.

We were sorry for him and ashamed of ourselves when we heard, as we did later, that Shicken had been blind of one eye, which fact, probably led to his accident.

Adrian became a great favorite with Job after this, who, poor fellow, accepted an invitation to have his photograph taken, which was certainly a striking one.

His coarse hair stood up all over his head like the donkey's, and his warts came out like little cheeses all over his cheeks, and his nose looked as if one of the donkeys had trodden on it — yet Job had a pleasant expression, and in spite of his personal disadvantages we all liked to look at him and at his picture. It reminded us of many pleasant hours.

When the time came for returning to town, Adrian found that his mother had written to the Commissioners of Emigration, and had found that a man named Job Perkstrüpp, and his son Phillibert, had come over in the "Washington," on such a date, which corresponded with Job's story.



THE RECOGNITION OF PICKLEBACK.

Could this be *Pigstirrup* and *Pickleback*?

We concluded that it might be ; then Adrian took up the search. He traced them to the beer-shop, but no further ; there he lost all trace.

In the meantime Jem and Giles went about asking every little German whom they saw, "Are you *Pickleback*?" But no one responded "yes." They got rid of all their pennies, but found nothing.

Adrian continued to work, conscientiously. He visited Blackwell's Island, he went to the German Hospitals — he was clever and industrious in his search. All the time he could spare from school he spent in searching for Pickleback. He got thin over it, and his mother finally told him that it was useless

— that she had no doubt but that Pickleback had gone west with Mr. Brace's boys, or else had sickened and died, alone in a strange city, poor boy, or perhaps drifted out to the small German vegetable gardens in the neighborhood of New York.

"That is an idea!" said Adrian, starting up. "Give me a week more, mother, and let me have some car fare!"

So this indefatigable boy visited many of these green patches of land about New York, where the patient Germans raise water-cresses, spinach, salads, and late and early vegetables for the New York market. There were plenty of poor German boys who would have been very glad to be Pickleback — only they were not.

Adrian, of course, had not left the newsboys' lodging house unvisited, but had met few German boys there. He, however, knew that that was always changing its population, so he determined to go once more. He is one of those tenacious people who never give up hoping and working, and such are sure to be rewarded sometime.

He went down one morning to hear the boys sing and to enjoy the scene of their comforts, when a great thrill ran through him.

"Surely," said he, pressing his hand to his forehead, "surely, those are Job Pigstirrup's warts!"

There on the fifth bench, and the third seat from the end, sat Job Pigstirrup's living image.

It was all that Adrian could do to repress his curiosity until the services were nearly at an end, when he whispered to Mr. Brace :

"Sir, may I speak to that third boy on the fifth bench?"

"Oh, certainly, certainly," said Mr. Brace.

So Adrian walked quietly up to the fifth bench, and leaned over to a small, round-headed boy :

"What is your name?"

"Johnny Schmoker," said the boy, and the others laughed loud.

Adrian was terribly disappointed. Could it be that this was anybody but Pickleback?

"We call him so because he is a German," said a boy near. "We call him Johnny Schmoker."

Adrian thought a minute, and looked at the boy; he grew more and more like Job Pigstirrup every minute.

"Pickleback!" said Adrian, finally.

The boy gave a start, and looked as if he would

run away, but Adrian caught him by the sleeve.

"Who told you that?" said the boy, angrily. "You send me to prison!"

And he struggled to get away.

Adrian put his hand in his pocket, and took out Job Pigstirrup's picture, and held it before the boy's eyes.

"Mein fader, mein fader!" said the poor boy, grasping at it, and bursting out crying.

"Then you are *Pickleback!*" said Adrian. "I mean you no harm. I want to take you back to your father."

This little scene had created quite an excitement, and a crowd gathered around the two boys.

When the Principal became aware of the facts, he allowed Adrian to take the rescued Pickleback home, telling him, however, that he had committed some small crime which had caused him to be sent to the "Home for Juvenile Delinquents" for a year. Pickleback, hungry and lost in New York, had, after being separated from his father, stolen an egg, and had thus rendered himself amenable to the law. After getting out, he had led a precarious existence as bootblack and newsboy, until rescued by Adrian. Perhaps some day Adrian will tell you the adventures of Pickleback.

It was a happy day for the three boys when they escorted Pickleback, clad in one of Jem's cast-off suits, back to Job Pigstirrup.

It did them all good to see the poor father and son meet again. They were ugly, poor, rather dirty, but their love for each other was as bright as a diamond, more precious than gold, and together they would grow better.

Job gave them all a donkey ride on the beach, and some pretzels and cheese. Lager, Kraut and Gingerbread were very well, and made their musical chaunt — "*Ki-chunk! ki-chunk!*" like poor, lost Shicken.

"Let us go to Shicken's grave," said Adrian. "Come, Job, tell us where you buried him."

"Buried him!" said Job. "No, no, I sell him to zee bone-boiler man — dat's his skin down dere. No use — dead donkey, but for bone-boiler man!"

The boys were shocked at this want of poetical sensibility in Job; but they left him and Pickleback very happy in each other's society, each one of them with his arm about a donkey's neck, and smiling cheerfully.